

Watkins Mill IB MYP Partnership

Watkins Mill H. S., Neelsville M.S., Montgomery Village M.S.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

Schools in the Watkins Mill cluster adhere to the principles and practices of the policy for Special Educational Needs (SEN) of students as set by the state of Maryland and the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Board of Education. Expectations for schools are that learning opportunities offered inside the classroom should include all students. The Watkins Mill cluster believes that this policy strongly supports the International Baccalaureate's (IB) mission statement to "encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right." (IB mission statement 2004) MCPS is striving to create a school system where academic success is not predictable by race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, language proficiency or disability. MCPS faculty understands the need to be skillful in determining and addressing the learning needs and styles of all students.

MCPS teachers accommodate students with identified learning disabilities and tailor curriculum and instruction to meet the individual needs of students. Watkins Mill cluster schools specialize instruction in heterogeneously mixed classes. Special education teachers co-teach with content certified teachers to differentiate process, content, and product for students. Teachers receive ongoing, school wide professional development for instructional strategies and work with the staff development teacher who designs the professional development to distinguish among innovation strategies and differentiation strategies. The special education resource teachers work with staff to assist with instructional needs during instructional periods and at times of school wide high-stakes assessments to meet the testing accommodations for students with individualized educational plans.

Special education teachers work in collaboration with the general educator and counselor through the planning of instructional delivery and the individualized education program (IEP) process. MCPS commits support to schools for aids and resources, where appropriate, that may be necessary to provide the students with a least restrictive school environment. Monitoring of student progress and the provisioning of feedback to parents regarding their child's development occurs on an annual basis through IEP and 504 meetings.

In MCPS, the shared belief is that a high-quality education is the fundamental right of every child. All children will receive the respect, encouragement, and opportunities they need to build the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be successful, contributing members of a global society.